

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-14. (Cancelled).

15. (New) A method for maintaining and promoting hair thickening, comprising (A) providing a composition for increasing the expression of keratinocyte growth factor (FGF-7) in hair follicle cells; and (B) applying the composition to the scalp of a subject in need thereof for a period of time, such that the thickness of the subject's hair after the step (B) is substantially the same or greater than that before the step (B), wherein the period is at least one month.

16. (New) A method according to claim 15, wherein expression of the FGF-7 is increased by applying to the scalp an external skin preparation containing one or more types of agents that increase the expression of FGF-7 in hair follicle cells selected from the group consisting of adenosine, adenosine 5'-phosphoric acid, adenosine 5'-phosphate, CCPA (2-chloro-N⁶-cyclopentyladenosine), C1-IB-MECA (2-chloro-N⁶-(3-iodobenzyl)-9-[5-(methylcarbamoyl)-β-D-ribofuranosyl] adenine), and NECA (N-ethylcarboxyamido-adenosine).

17. (New) A method according to claim 16, wherein at least one type of the agent that increases expression of FGF-7 in the hair follicle cells is adenosine.

18. (New) A method according to claim 15, wherein the hair follicle cells are dermal papilla cells or outer root sheath cells.

19. (New) A method according to claim 16, wherein the hair follicle cells are dermal papilla cells or outer root sheath cells.

20. (New) A method according to claim 17, wherein the hair follicle cells are dermal papilla cells or outer root sheath cells.